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- NEWS RELEASE -

BYSIEWICZ: MORE THAN 21,000 LATINOS BECOME NEWLY REGISTERED VOTERS DURING ¡TU VOTO *SI* CUENTA! CAMPAIGN

SECRETARY OF THE STATE DECLARES UNPRECEDENTED STATEWIDE EFFORT TO PROVIDE VOTER EDUCATION TO LATINOS A SMASHING SUCCESS

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz today successfully concluded the first-of-its-kind statewide effort to increase Latino voter registration in Connecticut, showing that since the launch of the 2008 “¡Tu Voto *Si* Cuenta!” campaign on June 10th, more than 21,000 Latinos became newly registered voters. With the message in Spanish that “Your Vote ***DOES*** Count,” the campaign’s goal was to register 10,000 new Latino voters in Connecticut by the October 28th deadline. The campaign more than doubled its goal for the year.

“This is a historic year for Latino voter participation in Connecticut,” said Bysiewicz. “We have succeeded in the ¡Tu Voto *Si* Cuenta! campaign beyond anyone’s wildest expectations. It is clear that nationally, Latinos are key swing voters in the Presidential election. And it’s my sincere hope that this campaign to register and educate voters about the importance and the ease of casting a ballot will permanently increase civic participation within the Latino community.”

Bysiewicz added, “I am so proud of all the work done by my office and our partners in this effort, especially the volunteers who gave their time in towns and cities across this

state and went knocking door-to-door, talking to their neighbors about voting and organized community events and festivals where Latinos could register to vote.”

Secretary Bysiewicz partnered in the “¡Tu Voto *Si* Cuenta!” campaign with The Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, which helped to establish volunteer committees in Bridgeport, Danbury, Hartford, Meriden, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Wallingford, Waterbury, and Willimantic.

Results of the campaign showed that a total of 21,570 Latinos became newly registered voters since the ¡Tu Voto *Si* Cuenta! campaign was launched on June 10th. Individual results for new Latino voters during this time in cities and towns across Connecticut are:

Bridgeport 2967	New Britain 1279	Meriden 518
Hartford 2126	Stamford 765	Danbury 516
Waterbury 1794	East Hartford 699	Stratford 493
New Haven 1373	Norwalk 599	Manchester 486

There were also communities such as West Haven, West Hartford, Norwich, New London, Hamden and Bristol that each registered more than 300 new Latino voters during the campaign.

“As Connecticut’s top elections official, I have always viewed one of my chief missions as encouraging more participation in the political process,” said Secretary Bysiewicz. “Today I am saying to the more than 125,000 registered Latino voters in Connecticut: your vote does count! Now that you have registered, get out there and vote on November 4th. Latinos are the largest and fastest growing ethnic group in our state and I believe we have an obligation to open the doors of democracy to everyone who is eligible to vote.”

Bysiewicz’s office estimates that about half of the eligible Latino voters in Connecticut are registered to vote. Nationally, it is estimated that nearly 18 million Latinos are eligible to vote, but only 47% of those eligible voted in the 2004 Presidential election. Latinos are an important voting bloc in the Presidential election, in key swing states like Ohio, Florida, New Mexico and Nevada.

The non-partisan “¡Tu Voto *Si* Cuenta!” mounted an aggressive media campaign (radio, print, and television) targeting the Spanish speaking market to encourage voter participation but also provide significant voter education on how to use paper ballots with the new optical scan voting technology, as well as information on voter rights and proper forms of identification for registering and voting.

“This unique partnership has afforded us a unique opportunity to not just organize the Latino community and educate them on their voting rights,” said Carlos Alvarez, Chairman of the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, “but to create a long-term movement towards the civic engagement of Latinos that will yield tangible results in terms of our political representation in civil society.”

To that end, Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz office set up an official website to coordinate the “¡Tu Voto *Si* Cuenta!” campaign. The official website is www.tuvotosicuenta.com

Joining Secretary Bysiewicz and the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs commission in the effort to educate and register Latino voters are several national Latino organizations that provided staff and technical assistance:

The United States Hispanic Leadership Institute

<http://www.uskli.org/>

The Hispanic Federation

<http://www.hispanicfederation.org/>

The NALEO Education Fund

<http://www.naleo.org/>

Democracia U.S.A.

<http://democraciausa.org/>